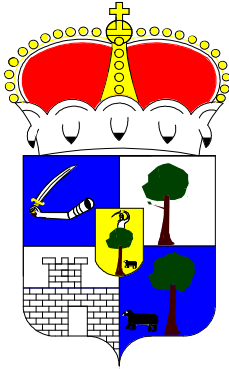


Gagarin Gagarine



Description of Arms :

Quarterly : 1, azure fesswise an arm couped embowed, its bicep in armour, and holding in bend sinister a sword proper ; 2, argent on the lower edge a tree proper ; 3, argent on the lower edge a castle single-towered gules, masoned sable its port and light of the field ; 4, azure on the lower edge a tree proper and passant thereunder on the dexter a bear sable ; Surtout, an escutcheon or, on the lower edge a tree proper, ensigned with the coronet of a Russian Prince and rising therefrom an arm counter-embowed, vambraced and holding in bend sinister a sword proper, and in the sinister base, approaching a tree, a bear passant sable.

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Principal Title : Prince Gagarin.

Creation : By tradition ; but the rank of prince was confirmed, for several branches, by the Russian Empire between the years 1798 and 1890.

Subsidiary Titles : This family is accorded the prefix of Illustrious Highness. This is the usual address for mediatised counts of the Holy Roman Empire but, in this case, is a special honour.

Family Name : Gagarin or Gagarine, depending on the country in which the holder finds himself.

Family History : This is one of several families which descend from the Great Prince Vladimir Sviatoslavich, the Christianiser of Russia. That, at least, is how he is referred to in Russian texts. For Westerners, it might be said that he is also known as Saint Vladimir (956-1015). In many ways, he can be said to have been the Charlemagne of Russia. He became Prince of Novgorod in 970 and Great Prince of Kiev in 980. He converted his people to Orthodox (Byzantine) Christianity.

One of his descendants was Prince Ivan Vsevolodovich and he received, from his brother the Great Prince Yaroslav, the appanage of Starodub. This was the origin of the princes of Starodub. Ivan had a great-grandson, Ivan Fedorovich, and he had three grandsons, the youngest of which was known as Ivan Gagara.

To differentiate themselves from their numerous cousins - as happened frequently in this great family - his descendants called themselves Gagarin. This occurred at a time when surnames were becoming more popular, and more essential, throughout Europe. The Gagarins prospered and served the Throne as *boyars* and in other distinguished position. The term boyar is not an easy one to translate but it implied a noble of high rank and one close to the Throne. Most titles in Russia reflected service to the monarch. Many were not hereditary, though the highest were generally accompanied by a personal honour, which could be transmitted to children.

The Gagarin family, coming from such distinguished origins naturally were considered as princes and were later confirmed in that rank. Prince Pavel Pavlovich Gagarin was President of the Council of Minister from 1864.

Gagarin Gagarine

Saint Vladimir Sviatoslavich (c956-1015),
Great Prince and Christianiser of Russia

